

Surat Ibrahim (14) – Nouman Ali Khan Notes

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Introduction

Verse 1

الرَّكِيبُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى
النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿١﴾

Alif-lam-ra. A magnificent Book that We have sent down to you that you may deliver people from darknesses into light to the path of ultimate authority, the one deserving praise constantly.

Darkness to Light

This phrase is repeated throughout the Qur'an. Recall the statement in Surat'l-Baqarah (2, 257); in that verse, Allah is the subject of the verb. Meaning, Allah is the One taking people from darknesses into light.

In this verse (14, 1), the subject of the verb is the Messenger ﷺ. He has been given this Book to bring people from darknesses into light. We should never, however, think that the Messenger ﷺ is doing this action out of his own power. Guidance is always from Allah the Most High. For this reason, the qualifier *bi idhni Rabbihim* (by the permission of the Master of the people being called) is found in the verse.

Verse 2

اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَوَيْلٌ
لِّلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٢﴾

[That is] Allah, to whom whatever is in the skies and whatever is on earth belongs. And the worst kind of destruction/terror is for disbelievers because of an intense punishment.

But who are the *kuffar*? See the very next verse.

Verse 3

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ
عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾

Those who prefer worldly life over the next. And they obstruct themselves and others from Allah's path and furthermore they pursue crookedness in that path. They are in a far off misguidance.

Descriptions of the disbelievers

The disbelievers are given different descriptions throughout the Qur'an. Each description must be paid attention to separately so that the bigger picture may be grasped. Here, the disbelievers are described as those who give preference to this life over the next. In this is a lesson for the believers! If the believer's life looks like his only goals are in this life and he has no plans for the next life, then, although he may not be a disbeliever, he is sharing qualities with the disbelievers. This is not a healthy thing to do. This is also not something any person can attribute to another person. This is a matter of the hearts; each person needs to assess his or her own heart and ponder whether or not he or she is free from these diseases.

The disbelievers are also described in this verse as those who obstruct their own path, the path of others, and they pursue crookedness in the path. This means not only do they not follow this path, but if they see someone else following it, they put obstructions in that person's path. If that does not work, then instead of pulling the people back, they attack the religion itself (e.g. make criticism).

Verse 4

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ
فِيضِلَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِيَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

And We did not send any messenger at all except in the language of his people that he may clarify for them. So Allah misleads whoever He wants (and whoever wants to be

mislead) and He guides whoever He wants (and whoever wants to be guided). And He is the ultimate authority, the All-Wise.

In Surat Yusuf, we had this conversation before! Actually, this is actually a series of surat with similar themes – from Yusuf to Ar-Ra'd to Ibrahim to Al-Hijr.

Two things are mentioned here: I) the Messenger's tongue is Arabic and II) the Qur'an is being sent to him to deliver to the people. Between the lines there is a third thing: the *sunnah*. When the Messenger uses his own tongue that is *sunnah*.

Verse 5

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ
مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّ فِي
ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٥﴾

We have no doubt already sent Musa with Our miraculous signs, that “You should deliver your people from darkneses into light and remind them of Allah’s days.” In that there are multiple miraculous signs for everyone who will be continuously, repeatedly patient and extremely grateful.

Ending Qualities

These qualities are not mentioned by any accident. People who are going to follow the legacies of those great messengers will be calling people from darkneses to light, to the message of Islam. These people will have to be patient because they will face a lot of challenges. While they are facing these challenges, these people should feel extremely honored that Allah chose them for these challenges and not someone else. So the more challenges they face, these people are able to cope because of their patience and because they feel honored with the opportunity to serve Allah.

Verse 6

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ
أَنْجَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ
وَيَذْبَحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي
ذَلِكَ لَكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

And make mention when Musa said to his nation, “Make mention of Allah’s favor upon you when He rescued you from the lineage of Fir’awn, they were blackening your faces (e.g. they were humiliating you), and they were slaughtering your sons and allowing your women to live. In that there was a HUGE test that was especially from your Master.”

Verse 7

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ
كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾

And remember when your Master proclaimed, “Even if you are a little grateful at one time, I will certainly increase for You over and over again. And if you were to be ungrateful even once, no doubt My punishment truly is intense.”

Why mention gratitude instead of patience in times of difficulty?

The previous verse just mentions difficulty. In times of difficulty we often think of patience. This verse, however, jumps to gratitude.

There is so much emphasis in the conditional phrase to show that demonstrating gratitude even once, in the smallest of forms is so rewarded. Yet, for the person who shows ingratitude even once, he does not even deserve to be mentioned; see how the person is absent from that part of the phrase? We would expect that Allah would

mention that this person would be punished, but Allah does not even mention the person. If you forget to mention Allah, why should you be mentioned.

Verse 8

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّ تَكْفُرُوا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَأِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ
حَمِيدٌ ۝ ٨

And Musa said, “If you were to disbelieve, you and all of the people in the world, all together, and certainly Allah is in no need of it and He is praised in and of Himself.”

Musa is resounding with his nation what Allah has said previously.

Verse 9

الْمَیَّاتِکُمْ نَبَؤُا الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِکُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ
وَتَمُودَ وَالَّذِیْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَا یَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّهُ جَاءَتْهُمْ
رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَیِّنَاتِ فَرَدُّوا أَیْدِیَهُمْ فِیْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَالُوا إِنَّا کَفَرْنَا
بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ ؕ وَإِنَّا لَفِی شَکٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَنَا إِلَیْهِ مُرِیْبٍ ۝ ٩

Didn't the news of those who came much before you come to you – the nations of Nuh and 'Aad and Thamud and those who came much after them? No one knows them except Allah. Their messengers came to them with clear proofs also, but they put their hands back in their mouths and they openly said, “We disbelieve no doubt about it in whatever you have been sent with, and we are the ones that especially in whatever you are calling us to we are in a doubt that keeps growing and puts more and more of us in doubt.”

No one knows them except Allah

This is mentioning that the outcome of these people was so severe that no one can find their remains. They are buried that deep in the ground.

They put their hands in their mouths

This is an expression of frustration. Nowadays, this would be like vile language.

Their doubt is, just like Surat Ar-Ra'd, in the messenger himself. They are skeptical about the agenda.

Verse 10

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُخْرِجَكُم إِلَىٰ
أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى قَالُوا إِنَّ أَنتُم إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا
عَمَّا كَانَتْ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَاؤُنَا فَآتُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾

All of those messengers said, "Is there any doubt about Allah, Creator of the skies and the earth? He is inviting you so that He can forgive you because of your sins, and He keeps giving you extra time until a deadline that is proclaimed and well-named." (Then they came to their next argument) They said, "You are just like us. You just want to turn us away from what our fathers used to worship. Bring forward any clear proof."

In the previous verse, the people have clearly mentioned their doubt is about the messengers themselves. They may not have doubt in Allah. Why then are the messengers asking if the people have doubt about Allah? The messengers are going to the heart of the matter. Denying their message from Allah is denying Allah Himself.

The argument of the people themselves contains their irrationality. If they truly wanted proof, they would have mentioned that first. Instead, their first step was to ask if they were to turn away from their history, ancestors. They have already given you reasons for them never leaving. Even if you bring them proof, they will again mention their tradition to argue.

Verse 11

قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنْ نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَمُنُّ
عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَمَا كُنَّا لَنَا أَنْ نَأْتِيَكُمْ بِسُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

Their messengers said to them, "We are nothing but mortal beings just like yourselves, however, Allah chooses to favor whoever He wants of His servants. It is not becoming of us to bring you any kind of authoritative proof except by Allah's permission. And upon Allah alone believers are supposed to rely."

By mentioning they are mortals themselves, the messengers are agreeing with the disbelievers' accusation. They are mortals, but there is a qualifier for why they should be believed and followed; Allah has chosen to favor them. Interesting how this let's us better understand why they would ask in Verse 10 if the people were really denying Allah.

Verse 12

وَمَا لَنَا إِلَّا نُنْوَكَلُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانَا سُبُلَنَا وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ
عَلَىٰ مَا أَذَيْتُمُونَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

And what would be wrong with us that we wouldn't rely entirely on Allah and He has guided us to His multiple pathways and we will absolutely remain patient over whatever torture you cause us. And upon Allah those who place trust should continue to pay their trust.

Placing trust in anything and everything besides Allah will disappoint.

Verse 13

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلرُّسُلِ هُمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ
لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ
الظَّالِمِينَ



And those who disbelieved said to their messengers, “We will get you out of our land or we will make sure you return to our religion (e.g. bring you into the melting pot, make you assimilate).” So their Master revealed to them, “We will destroy the wrongdoers.”

Min ardhinaa | Analysis

Typically, we find the phrase *min al-ardhi* (“from the earth” or “from the land”). Here, however, we see *min ardhinaa* (“from our land”). It is as if the people are telling their messengers that they do not even belong in this land; it is like they are saying the message does not belong here and these people and their message needs to be expelled from here. These messengers were from that land, though. For the disbelievers, Islam was enough to revoke a person’s citizenship.

Culture

Understand that culture cannot be removed from people. Culture does not need to be removed to establish Islam. Islam came to the Arab culture. Down to the foods we eat and what we do in our free time, that is our culture. Islam did not come to remove these things. Islam came to clean up the cultures and bring them the purity of Islam. These people, however, do not want to accept any bit of Islam because they think any bit of Islam is against their culture.

Culture is one of the two things that drive people (the other is education). Culture is actually more powerful than education; it is what is considered normal in society. Even if education considers something to be incorrect, culture may accept the matter. As for Islam, there are times when it counters the dominant culture (e.g. dresscode, corporate culture, mannerisms). When these lines need to be drawn, people will consider it weird and will try to normalize the other person (e.g. assimilate).

Verse 14

وَلَنُثَبِّتَنَّكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي
وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ

And We will station you in the land even after them. That is for the one who feared standing in front of Me and was afraid of My threatening promise.

Wa'id | Word Analysis

Wa'd is a promise. *Wa'id* carries the emotion of fear. It is a scary or threatening promise. This term is never used in the positive sense.

Verse 15

وَأَسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

And they (the prophets, messengers, and their followers) asked for victory from Allah, and every wrongfully stubborn tyrant was annihilated.

Jabbaarin | Word Analysis

To force a broken bone to go straight. A ruler who is *jabbaar* is ruthless and will make his people act in accordance with what he thinks is straight behavior whether the people are willing or unwilling.

'Anid | Word Analysis

This is "someone stubborn upon not doing the right thing".

Verse 16

مِّنْ وَرَآئِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

Behind him (behind his loss in the world) is Hell, then he will be given pus water to drink.

Sadid | Word Analysis

One of the words for “pus”. It is a fresh wound and the blood is mixed with water to give a strange texture.

Verse 17

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ، وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ، وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ
مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِنْ وَرَآئِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾

He will gulp it, but will barely (be able to i.e. because it is so difficult to stomach) swallow it. And death comes to him from every direction and he is not going to die at all. And behind that is tough punishment.

Tajarr'u | Word Analysis

To drink something gulp by gulp because it is so difficult to drink.

First, they were destroyed. Then, they were in Hell. Then, they were given this nasty stuff to drink that won't even go down their throat. It is being shoved down their throat. They want to die so that the punishment will end. Then, they are told that this isn't even the tough punishment. The intense, ruthless punishment is still to come.

Verse 18

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ
فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَى شَيْءٍ ذَلِكَ هُوَ
الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٨﴾

The example of those who disbelieved in their Master, their deeds are like dust (or ash), which the wind blows forcefully on a day that the wind is intensified; they will have no control over what they earned in any capacity. That is the ultimate, farthest misguidance.

Disbelievers do have good deeds. On the Day of Judgment, they will bring these deeds. They may have done them, but where was their intent? The absence of true intent is what makes their deeds like ash, which will be blowing away on that day.

Verse 19

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ إِنْ يَشَأْ
يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٩﴾

Didn't you see that Allah created the skies and the earth with purpose? If He wanted, He would remove you all and bring out a new creation.

Humanitarians find a cause and dedicate themselves to it. The very first thing we all need to realize, however, is Who created and provides for all of this. Then, be a humanitarian.

Verse 20

وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

And that is not a hard thing for Allah.

'Aza | Word Analysis

Something to be difficult to accomplish.

Verse 21

وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا
لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَالُوا لَوْ
هَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهْدَيْنَاكُمْ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرُ عَنَّا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا
مِنْ مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٢١﴾

And they will be brought face-to-face with Allah, all together. The weak will say to those who are arrogant and sought greatness for themselves, "We used to follow you. Are you able to save us from the punishment of Allah today?" They will say, "If Allah had guided us, we would have guided you. It is all the same for us whether we lose it or we are patient: we have no place to go to hide away from the trouble."

Jazi'a | Word Analysis

It is the opposite of *sabara* e.g. to have lost patience, been overwhelmed.

Mahis | Word Analysis

Root: Ha-waw-Sad or Ha-ya-Sad

It is a place where you hide to get away from trouble.

Verse 22

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ
وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ
دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا
بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا
أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

And Shaytaan now speaks when the matter will have been decided, "God promised you, no doubt about it, the promise was absolutely true. And I promised you too, but (what a shock) I went back on that promise. And I didn't have any authority over you. All I did was invite you and you responded to me. So don't blame me, but blame yourselves. I'm not going to scream at you and ask for help and you're not going to be doing that to me (because what's the point). I deny all the shirk you did with me from much before (I have nothing to do with it, that was all you). No doubt, the wrongdoers will have extreme, painful punishment."

Verse 23

وَأُدْخِلَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

And those who believed and acted righteously are entered into Gardens at the bottoms of which rivers flow, they will remain there permanently by their permission of their Master. Their greetings of life and rejuvenating life will constantly be "Salaam!"

Udkhila | Word Analysis

Dakhala means that someone enters himself or herself. *Udkhila* means that the person is escorted.

People are enjoying each others' company and they are constantly saying *salaam* to each other.

Verse 24

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ
أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٢٤﴾

Didn't you ever notice/see how Allah gives an example, a word that is good and pure like a tree that is good and pure? Its roots are planted deep in the ground and its branches extend into the sky.

The good word is the *shahadah*. Its roots being planted deep is like *imaan* which is at the foundation of everything; everything is built upon this strong foundation. Its branches reaching toward the sky are like the good deeds of a believer that are numerous and spread widely. The believer is also reaching toward the sky for acceptance of his deeds from the sky.

Verse 25

تُؤْتِي أَكْلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

It gives its produce all the time, by the permission of its Master. And Allah gives examples for people so that they can make an effort to remember.

Remember how we read in Surat Ar-Ra'd (13, 35) about the constant freshness of the produce in Paradise? For the believers, the pleasures of constant goodness are found in this world through the good deeds which stem from *imaan*. These will bear further fruits (e.g. constant fruits) through the benefits of the Hereafter.

A few extra points:

- Fruit contains seeds which will allow perpetuation of the plant and fruit
- Trees take a long time to grow just like human development; character takes a long time to develop. Even the Companions took time to develop. In fact, Allah compares the Companions to a farm (48, 29) that needed *tarbiyyah*.
- Once a tree has grown, it still requires nourishment, water, rain. Where does rain come from? The sky. What is rain often a metaphor for? Revelation. So even when a believer is strong in belief, he requires continued sustenance and guidance by means of revelation.

Verse 26

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ
مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ

And the example of a filthy word (a word of shirk) is like a filthy, vile tree. It has been uprooted from the surface of the earth, it doesn't have any station.

It's like a bushy plant with only thorns that is just sitting on the land with no greenery. It can literally just be picked up and thrown away. It is as if to say the only reason the disbelievers have been around for so long (e.g. the pagan Makkans) is because nobody has come around to clean this garden. If they have no deeply rooted foundation, they will just be picked up and thrown away.

Verse 27

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ مَا
يَشَاءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

Allah will plant firm those who truly believe with the firm word, in worldly life and in the next. And Allah will mislead those who did wrong. And Allah does whatever He wants.

Verse 28

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ
الْبَوَارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

Didn't you look towards those who replaced the favor of Allah with disbelief? And their nation released upon themselves the home of destruction?

They were given Makkah, the Ka'bah, the legacy of Ibrahim 'alayhi as-salaam and they turned all of that into *kufri*! They brought all of this punishment upon themselves.

Verse 29

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا وَيَبْسُ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٢٩﴾

Hell is where they are going to be cast into, where they are going to remain; and what a horrible place to remain.

In verse 26, the bad tree did not have a place to plant itself firmly (*maa laha min qaraar*). Now, however, it does have a place to stay (*wa bisa al-qaraar*); a truly horrible place to stay.

Verse 30

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أُنْدَادًا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا فَإِنَّ
مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ ﴿٣٠﴾

And they placed competitors with Allah so they can misguide away from His path. Tell them, "Enjoy yourselves. Your final home is headed towards the Fire."

It is not that these people will just end up in the Hellfire, but they are making their own way towards it with their deeds. Even the wording of the Qur'an (*masirakum ila an-naar*) shows they are headed toward that abode.

Verse 31

قُلْ لِعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ
سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعُ فِيهِ وَلَا خِلَالٌ ﴿٣١﴾

Say to My slaves who have come to believe to establish prayer and spend whatever We have given them secretly and openly, before a Day arrives in which there is no sale, nor is there any sort of friendship.

Khilaa | Word Analysis

This is "long-term friendship" as opposed to *khulaal* which includes even a single act of friendship.

Verse 32

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً
فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ
لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْأَنْهَارَ

Allah is the One Who created the skies and the earth and He sent water down from the sky. Then, He brought out from it all kinds of fruits as provision for you. And He subdued and put to work for you ships so that they may sail in the ocean by His command and He subdued for you all the rivers and oceans.

We tame animals for ourselves and even behind that Allah is actually willing the deed. Allah has tamed the oceans and rivers for us to use.

Verse 33

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ
وَالنَّهَارَ

And He put to work, for your sake, the sun and the moon, continuously. And He subdued for you, the night and the day (as a result).

Sun and Moon

This is like the calendar and the clock. Allah put them there for us.

Da'aba | Word Analysis

To work such that even if you are tired you do not take a break. The sun and moon are almost tired. One day, Allah will let them take a break and they will crash into each other; Surat'l-Qiyamah will teach us about this.

Why all this subduing?


Everything has been put to work for us. When this happens, it must mean that we have more important things to do. Think about it. Everybody works for the king. Why? So that he can kick back and watch television? No, of course not. The belief is that he has more important things to take care of; the other people are just supporting him.

Allah has subdued all of these matters for us, put them to our service. This means that what we have to do must be really important.

What about the lousy king – or the next generation prince? He tends to not take matters seriously, living his life of luxury, and completely destroying the kingdom. Just like this, the first generations realized that Allah has put the world to our service so that we can serve Allah. The next generation sees that the world is working around them so they can relax; they are chillin' because they think they have time. According to Allah, the facilities we enjoy in life are not meant to put us in a state of relaxation, but a state of urgency. To have us realize that our work is so important that the sun and moon have been put to our service. This is meant to direct us to think what service do we have to provide in return?

Verse 34

وَأَتَيْنَكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ



And He has given to you from everything that you have asked for. And if you were to try and count the blessing of Allah. No doubt, the human being is extremely, excessively wrongdoing and repeatedly ungrateful.

Sual | Word Analysis

It is to ask and to demand. There are people who ask from Allah and He grants them. Then there are things that we demand from Allah: food, air, shelter, safety. We don't even ask for these, but our physical existence demands them. We read about these in Surat'l-Rahman (55, 29)

{Whoever is within the heavens and earth asks Him, every day He is bringing about a matter.}

You could counterargue that the disbeliever is not asking Allah. He may be not explicitly asking Allah, but even his existence is asking for oxygen from Allah, his heart is asking for the next expansion and contraction.

Ni'mat | Word Analysis

This is the singular form. The plural exists, but this is used because it means if you were to count the number of ways one favor of Allah benefits you, you wouldn't be able to encompass or encircle it. Even if you could say it with your tongue, you could not realize how powerful it is.

Think about it. Through the course of a day, our thoughts are many. We may communicate many of our thoughts to people. Imagine, not being able to communicate thoughts to others. Children have tantrums (terrible twos); the child has so many thoughts, but cannot process how to express them. That stresses the child.

Dhalumun kaffaarun

We are so *dhalum* (excessively, extremely wrongdoing), however, that we cannot even sit to ponder about **one** favor. We are not just wrongdoing, but we are also *kaffaar* (repeatedly ungrateful); we keep stumbling upon opportunities to thank Allah, but we continue to ignore them.

Now taking into consideration these two attitudes (*dhalumun kaffaarun*), we should appreciate the opposite – the attitude we are supposed to have. Allah moves on to talk about Ibrahim ‘*alayhi as-salaam*.

Verse 35

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ
أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ

And, when Ibrahim said, “Master, make this city/region/territory safe, peaceful and keep me and my offspring away from worshipping idols.

Aaminan

This is after the city has been built. Ibrahim ‘*alayhi as-salaam* has returned to find Makkah to be flourishing. He has made supplications for the city previously in Surat’l-Baqarah (2, 126):

{And when Ibrahim said, “My Master, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits – whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day.” [Allah] said, “And whoever disbelieves – I will grant him enjoyment for a little, then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and wretched is the destination.”}

Now, he sees that everything is taken care of (water supply, food). So now, he is going to ask for what is more important. If you look at the progression of the supplication, you will appreciate the genius of Ibrahim ‘*alayhi as-salaam*. Ibrahim ‘*alayhi as-salaam* acknowledges the occurrence of a previous conversation with Allah (2, 124) where he asks Allah for leaders from his offspring, but Allah responds that they will only be from the believing offspring, and now moves forward to talk about the city. He is asking that this city be made stable; he may have found it to be flourishing, but that does not mean it will always be this way or will be safe. That’s why he is supplicating for it.

Ijtinaab | Word Analysis

It is to make sure that someone is side-stepped, avoids something, kept at a distance.

Asnaam | Word Analysis

There are multiple words for idols in the Arabic language and in the Qur’an. Why is *Asnaam* used here? It is an idols carved out of gold, silver, expensive wood or other expensive materials. These idols are made for sale. They are used particularly as an industry.

Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* is asking for himself and his offspring to be kept at a distance from the industry of expensive idol-making because he has firsthand experience of it in his family – his father.

Verse 36

رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلَّلَنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۖ فَمَن تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي ۖ وَمَن
عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ



Master, they have mislead so many from among the people. So whoever follows me, then he is my people; and whoever disobeyed me, then certainly you are exceedingly Forgiving and Merciful.

He is not just talking from theory. He has seen it firsthand and realized that it is a huge threat. He has magnified the threat.

Furthermore, he does not just want to ask for his children. He is asking for whoever follows him.

Notice also, Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* doesn't ask Allah to punish the people who from this city (i.e. his offspring) have disobeyed him. Remember, he previously asked Allah to guide them all (2, 124), but was reprimanded. Now, he is not asking for them directly, but he still wants to invoke Allah's forgiveness and mercy for them so he calls upon Allah as the One Who is Extremely Forgiving and Especially Merciful.

Verse 37

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ
الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ أَفْعِدَةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي
إِلَيْهِمْ وَأَرْزُقْهُمْ مِّنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Our Master, I am the one who settled down out of my children in a valley that has no cultivation, by Your sacred House. Our Master, (I left all of them there) so that they may establish prayer. Then make the passionate parts of the people fall toward them and (after that) provide them from all kinds of food so that they can be grateful (to You).

Notice the shift from *rabbi* (My Master) to *rabbana* (Our Master); this means the supplicators includes his son, his family.

Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* is mentioning his good deed in trusting Allah by placing his family in what could have been perceived as danger. Why is he doing this? In order to ask for something by virtue of it.

When Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* left his family in Makkah, the Ka'bah was not there. He mentions, however, that he left his family by the sacred House. This must mean there was some foundation of the House visible as a landmark. This also makes sense with (2, 127) where it mentions that he raised the foundations; the foundations must have already been there for him to work with.

Tahwi | Word Analysis

Literally, it means "to desire". It is a desire so strong that you forget who you are, your place in society. It is usually used in a bad connotation (e.g. being madly in love to the point of obsession). Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* wants people to have this feeling toward the place where the Ka'bah is. Isn't that how our hearts actually feel when we see or are around the Ka'bah? Even more beautiful, when people come they are in *ihram* meaning they have forgotten about everything regarding their place in society just to be in front of this House.

It also means "to fall". That would mean the hearts of people should fall towards the people of this city. The modern English expression would be "falling in love".

What is this story doing in this conversation?

We were just reading about human beings being exceedingly ungrateful. Ibrahim *'alayhi as-salaam* is supplicating for his offspring and followers to be grateful. It is contrast.

Verse 38

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِي وَمَا نُعَلِنُ وَمَا يَخْفَى عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٣٨﴾

Our Master, no doubt You know what we keep hidden and everything we pronounce, and nothing gets hidden from Allah on the earth or in the heaven.

Hajj is a really great example for understanding this. During hajj, all of the statements are being made aloud; so they are pronounced and Allah knows of them. At the same time, the person in hajj could not have his heart at the same place as his tongue; so that would be what is hidden and Allah knows about that too.

Verse 39

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ
رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٩﴾

All praise and gratitude belong to Allah, who granted me despite my old age, (my sons) Isma'il and Ishaq. My Master truly is the Hearer of the supplications.

Verse 40

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ
دُعَاءِ

My Master, make me the establisher of prayer and out of my children also. Our Master, and accept the supplication.

There is a transition again from *rabbi* (My Master) to *rabbana* (Our Master). Ibrahim 'alayhi as-salaam started on his own, but when he mentioned his children, he brought in his son to make the supplication with him. He did not just make *du'aa*, but he took action.

A supplication is obviously made so that it can be accepted. Why then would he ask for it to be accepted? This phrasing is for desperation. Ibrahim 'alayhi as-salaam is desperate about this part of the supplication.

Verse 41

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

My Master, forgive me and both my parents and to the believers on the Day which the reckoning/accounting will be established (standing, coming into existence)."

Now we are going to move on to the last passage of Surat Ibrahim. This passage seems to take on a completely different theme: the punishments of disbelievers. Why would this be the next passage? We just heard about the supplications of Ibrahim 'alayhi as-salaam for his offspring. The pagans of Makkah are from the offspring. Hearing this supplication, they might think they are somehow beneficiaries of it.

Also, the believing people in Makkah are being tortured at the hands of the pagans. For them to hear this supplication, they may think that the pagans are going to be scot-free from everything they have done just because they are the offspring of Ibrahim 'alayhi as-salaam.

This next passage will make sure the pagans do not think these supplications apply to them whatsoever and it will make sure the believers do not ever think the crimes against them will go unpunished.

Aside: the believers were always told to have patience. Sometimes, one still wonders, however, what about the person who is being unjust with me? What is going to happen to him? To hear about what will happen to the unjust helps a person maintain patience. Think about this in terms of children. If one child is hurt by another and you tell him to have patience, he still wants to see that something was done to the other child by the authority figure. It actually helps him keep patient in not doing anything himself.

Verse 42

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٤٢﴾

And don't you ever think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers are doing. He is only delaying for them for a Day on which eyes will be petrified.

Shakhasa | Word Analysis

To be petrified into a state where you cannot move.

Verse 43

مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمْ لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ وَأَفْئِدَتُهُمْ
هَوَاءٌ ﴿٤٣﴾

Racing ahead (eyes on the target), their heads held up, their eyes do not even go back to their own selves, and their hearts have turned into a moving breeze.

Muhti'u | Word Analysis

When you are running toward a target and you do not take your eyes off the target at all.

The wrongdoers cannot move their eyes, but they can see while they are running. Not just that, but their heads are pulled up like a horse is with reigns. Even more, their hearts cannot catch a break; they are fluttering around like a moving breeze.

Verse 44

وَأَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ فَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رَبَّنَا
أَخْرَنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ نُبِجُّ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ ۖ وَلَمْ
تَكُونُوا أَقْسَمْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ زَوَالٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

And warn the people about a Day when the punishment will come at them and those who did wrong will say, "Master give us extra time, just a little bit more; we will respond to Your call immediately and we will follow the messengers." [And the response will come,] "Weren't you the ones who had sworn way back that you would not have any downfall ever?"

Look at the intelligence and stupidity of the disbeliever in one go: he is asking for a short time to return. He knows *tawbah* only takes a little while, but he couldn't do it beforehand.

Zawaal | Word Analysis

When the sun just goes down a little bit from its high point. The pagan Arabs had denied that they would ever even fall that much, let alone set completely (*ghurub*).

Verse 45

وَسَكَنْتُمْ فِي مَسْكَانِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَتَبَيَّنَ
لَكُمْ كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ الْأَمْثَالَ ﴿٤٥﴾

And you lived in the midst of homes of those who had wronged themselves and it had become clear to you how We dealt with them. And We even struck examples for you!

The pagans lived in a community where people all around them were disbelievers and they were living in an area where previous nations before them had already been destroyed because of their own wrongdoing.

Verse 46

وَقَدْ مَكَرُوا مَكْرَهُمْ وَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ
مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ ﴿٤٦﴾

[But no, they weren't going to understand those signs.] They have already plotted whatever plans they were going to make. And Allah possesses alone whatever plots they have

- i) **In used as the negative:** And their plot was never going to bring downfall to the mountains (anyways).
- ii) **In used as "if":** Even if their plans were sufficient (because of their elaborate nature) to bring down mountains.

Makar | Word Analysis

A plan that is made in secret so that the enemy does not know about it. Ironical for the pagans because Allah actually knows about whatever they were trying to secretly plot against Him.

Verse 47

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِ رُسُلَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو
انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

And don't you ever dare think Allah is going to be One to go back on His promises made to His messengers. Certainly, Allah is an ultimate authority and the Capable One of taking revenge.

Muntaqim vs Dhun Tiqam

Muntaqim is the One who takes revenge.

Dhun Tiqam is the One capable of taking revenge. This is far more powerful because one who takes revenge may not actually be *capable* of taking revenge. He has the power to do so.

Verse 48

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِ رُسُلَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو
أَنْتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

On the Day the earth will be changed with another earth, and the skies [won't be like they are now], and they will all be brought face-to-face before Allah, the One, the Undeniable.

Usually when the skies and earth are talked about in the Qur'an, the order is *samawat wa'l-ardh* (skies and then earth). Here, the order is exchanged and it is mentioning that that the actual earth and skies will be changed on that Day.

Al-Qahhar | Word Analysis

The One you try to avoid as much as possible, but you still can't

Verse 49

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٤٩﴾

And you are going to see the criminals on that Day bound together with one chain in shackles (one after the other).

Qarama | Word Analysis

To tie two or more camels together with a single, tightened rope. All of the criminals will be shackled together with one chain.

Safad | Word Analysis

The metal shackle used to keep the patient. The verb means to arrest someone and tie him up.

When you think of prisoners (i.e. in prison), what else do you think of? Look at the next verses to see those things come up.

Verse 50

سَرَابِيلُهُمْ مِنْ قَطَرَانٍ وَتُغْشَى وُجُوهُهُمُ النَّارُ ﴿٥٠﴾

Their outfit is made of molten copper and their faces will be covered with fire.

Sirbal | Word Analysis

Another word for *qamis* (shirt). It could be shirts and pants (e.g. a prisoner's jumpsuit). It is clothing that will protect you from heat. The Arabs would wear heavy clothes to protect themselves from the intensity of the burning sun.

This outfit is going to be interacting with their skin. As that happens, smoke will be coming out from the flames.

These are the people who tortured the messengers. Their torture was nothing in comparison to how they themselves will be tortured.

Verse 51

لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ

So that Allah may compensate every single person what he/she earned. No doubt about it, Allah is swift in taking account.

Verse 52

هَذَا بَلَاغٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنذَرُوا بِهِ وَلِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ وَلِيَذْكُرَ
أُولَئِكَ الْأَلْبَابِ

This is a direct, effective, penetrating communication for people so that they may be warned by means of it and so that they may come to know that He is only a single entity worthy of obedience, worship, reverence and so that the people of sound minds, pure intellect can make the effort to remember.

Balagh | Word Analysis

Literally meaning "to reach". *Balagha* eludes to the idea of a battle of words. You are the warrior communicating words. Your victim is the person receiving the words. It's like a hunting game. You have to make sure you hit the target; the real target are not the victim's ears, but his heart. If your words are *baligh*, you will be able to penetrate the barriers to get into his heart completely.

The Arabs did not have any *tafsir*. They only had the Qur'an. There is an effectiveness of the Qur'an being so direct.